FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

13 MAY 1986

Israel and Syria

There is no chance of Israel reaching a political settlement with Syria so long as President Hafiz al-Asad remains in power, Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres asserted in an interview reported by Jerusalem radio. He disclosed that Israeli efforts to establish a dialogue with the Syrians have received a negative response. As for Syria's military preparations, Jerusalem television stated that Israel takes a "very grave view" of fortifications recently established by the Syrians in eastern Lebanon, noting that a message on the issue has been transmitted to President al-Asad, but has "not yet borne fruit." The Syrians have prepared dugouts for tanks and artillery south of their current deployment line in the Al-Biqa' Valley, the television said, and while the United States has viewed these preparations as "defensive," the dugouts provide potential for an "offensive initiative" as large Syrian armored forces could occupy them within hours. In another military development, Beirut radio cited reports from southern Lebanon that Israeli military convoys were seen moving toward the Golan Heights during the night of 12-13 May. However, the commander of UN forces on the Golan earlier told IDF radio that both the Israeli and Syrian sectors of the heights were "quiet" with both sides adhering to their agreements.

In a related commentary, Jerusalem radio's Arabic service accused Syria of "war hysteria," adding that the crucial question now is whether the Damascus rulers will "slip and fall in the trap or whether they will show wisdom by deciding not to go to the brink of disaster." In Syria, Damascus radio's Palestine broadcast maintained that Britain's recent behavior toward Syria is aimed at providing a "cover for an Israeli aggression," which is "likely to take place but will certainly be defeated."

Syria-Iran

Reporting on the Syrian foreign minister's 12 May visit to Iran, Tehran radio said he stressed the importance of "further unity" between Iran and Syria and delivered a "kind message" from President al-Asad to Iranian President 'Ali Khamene'i.

Iran-Iraq War

An Iraqi military communique broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio reported further fighting in the East Maysan sector, claiming that Iraq's IV Army Corps defeated an enemy infantry attack, killing 76 Iranians, while over 240 Iranians were killed in other recent action in the area. An Iraqi military source cited by INA maintained that 1,584 Iranians were killed during the IV Army's 9 May offensive in the East Maysan sector. An Iranian communique cited by IRNA reported fighting in the same region, stating that Iranian planes bombed Iraqi targets in the Faqqeh area 12-13 May while Iranian troops repulsed two Iraqi attacks. Iran launched further air attacks in the Faqqeh sector early 13 May, according to a military announcement reported by Tehran radio.

On the situation in the Gulf, Iran's Navy commander told *ETTELA'AT that U.S. and French warships have recently been* disturbing Iranian searches of cargo ships entering the Gulf, and he warned the United States and France against such interference, according to IRNA.

Libya

Announcing Libya's decision to expel 36 diplomats from the embassies of Italy, FRG, France, Netherlands, Spain, Belgium, and Denmark, JANA said the diplomats are being deported in retaliation for the "arbitrary measures" adopted by these countries against members of Libyan People's Bureaus. JANA noted that employees remaining at these embassies are henceforth confined to the Tripoli area, which they cannot leave without securing official permission. Libya would not have applied the principle of reciprocal treatment had there been any real justification for the deportation of Libyans from People's Bureaus in Western Europe, JANA's political editor affirmed in a related commentary. The expulsion of two Belgian officials means that U.S. interests are no longer represented at all in Libya, according to Brussels radio.

In a separate development, JANA claimed the Israeli Air Force chief of staff has disclosed that "five Zionist pilots" participated in the 15 April U.S. raid on Libya.

Tunisian Detained in France

A Tunisian suspected of bomb attacks in Paris and London has told French police that he received orders and explosives from a PLO official in Baghdad, Paris radio reported.

Qatar-Bahrain

Qatar released the 30 captive foreign workers 12 May, Bahrain's *GULF DAILY NEWS reported, disclosing that the men were* suddenly taken from their cells and put on a flight to Bahrain.

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Najibullah Addresses Hazara Elders

LD122121 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 11 May 86

[Speech by Comrade Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee at a 10 May meeting with elders, ulema and intellectuals of the Hazara nationality at the Storay Palace of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs — recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Praise be to God alone, his prayers be upon Muhammad the chosen, and his family, who enjoy the grace of God, and his blessed disciples. [verse in Arabic]

On behalf of the PDPA leadership cadres and staff, I offer the most profound respects. It is a matter of particular honor for me to be among the toiling, courageous and brave people of Afghanistan. You have lived for ages side by side with all other nationalities, tribes and clans with courage, grace and bravery. You have shared sorrows and happiness. You live at the skirt of the Baba mountains, to the north and south of Hindu Kush, at the center of Afghanistan. Not only are your mountains lofty, but also your dignity, your courage and bravery, which are as lofty as the mountains of your land. [applause]

History is a witness to the fact that despotic plunderers, whose meal tables were filled by the toil, work and sweat of the people of Afghanistan — including your toiling people at the forefront — in their turn issued decrees saying you should not benefit from professional education and training, particularly in the military field and in the Armed Forces. They issued decrees saying you should not have the freedom to perform your religious tenets and faith in your takia khanas [worship places] and mosques. You were considered as [words indistinct] children in this country.

However, you have faught against nature, oppression and persecution. The people of Hazara are people with courage! [applause] We consider the people of Hazara a thinking and mature tribe toward [words indistinct] of the unity and (?reform) of all nationalities, tribes and clans. We consider our noble Hazara compatriots as the symbol of service for the toiling man. Thus, if here in Afghanistan there has been a revolution -- a revolution in the interest of the toilers, a revolution which has destroyed the blood-sucking (?legacy) of all oppression, all savagery, tyranny and depotism, and a prosperous and progressive life is being built for the prosperity of man -- then you, more than any other (?strata) and before every one else, are deserving, and the revolution belongs to you. [applause] Your work and toil is witness to the fact that more than anyone else and better than anyone else, you know [words indistinct]. Therefore, I have the pleasure, at the instruction of my party and my leadership and at your request, to find myself among you toiling and revolutionary men. [applause]

In accordance with the PDPA program of action and in accordance with the basic principles of the DRA, in which the equality of rights between nationalities, tribes and clans is enshrined, and which embodies the need peaceful coexistence as brothers and friends, we consistently and without deviation direct all our efforts toward the Hazara nationalitiy, here at the heart of Afghanistan, having equal rights with every other nationality in the political, social, economic and military spheres, and in all aspects of our society. [applause]

Within the framework of the 10 Theses, the resolution of the Revolutionary Council, and the decisions of the 16th Central Committee Plenum we have (?begun) broadening the social bases of revolution on the foundation of the active participation of the broad masses of the people, including all classes, strata, religious leaders, ulema, and representatives of all nationalities and tribes. Undoubtedly, we have already taken some steps in this direction. (?Eight) of your representatives were elected to the Revolutionary Council, including two to the Revolutionary Council Presidium. You have one of your noblest representative, Sorabi, in the Ministry of State of the Council of Ministers. You have four governors in the structure of the organs of the state administration. A number of you noble compatriots are present in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and embassies. Four of your noble representatives are serving as NFF deputies. Five of your representatives serve as deputy ministers in various ministries. A number of your (?people) are high cadres of the Armed Forces, while 200 have enrolled in higher education in the military field at home and abroad. Here in Afghanistan one of the most outstanding and most noble representatives of yours, of ours, one of the most outstanding PDPA leaders, Comrade Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand [applause] is the esteemed chairman of the Council of Ministers.

We announce here before you that the matter of (?counting) and [words indistinct] is not in question; what is important in our society is the question of work, talent and practical authority.

The Central Council of the toiling Hazara nationality, which, in the final analysis has been chosen by you as a political organ of the representatives of your toiling nationality, is [words indistinct]. This council not only supports those who are in the Central Council of the Hazara nationality, those who are our friends, and those who support the stand of the revolution and the plans of the Party and State, but also takes the aspirations, intentions and aims of the PDPA and the DRA state to those who are doubtful about their positions and tells them that, here in revolutionary Afghanistan, in their ancient land, they can, with all equality, have an honorable life.

I say before you that you should contact those who, for a variety of political and historical reasons or due to the brutality, savagery and oppression of Hafizullah Amin, have left their homes and have had to flee. Convey to them the message of the PDPA and the DRA state that we, on the basis of the content of the 10 Theses, are ready and prepared for national compromise. They will not be brought under investigation, but could, as healthy forces, take part in the political sovereignty of the country under the present phase of the national democratic revolution. If we succeed in bringing these forces and various categories of our people — who are living in doubt and undecisiveness or have been angered and disappointed — to the ranks of their own revolution, to the side of the party and its aspirations, and stand in a united front on the side of all national, progressive, democratic, freedom-loving, patriotic and humanitarian forces, (?then) we can say without hesitation that in the course of a short period, bloodshed in the country will stop, and a lasting nationwide peace will be maintained. [applause] [passage indistinct]

42 Rebels Captured, Arms Seized in Army Operations

LD130658 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0442 GMT 13 May 86

[Text] Kabul, May 12, BAKHTAR — Combing operations which were carried out by Armed Forces of the DRA in a number of localities in Qandahar, Balkh and Logar Provinces resulted in the confiscation of 130 rockets, 500 pieces of assorted weapons, and a large number of [words indistinct] of cannon and recoilless guns.

During the mopping up operation in a district of Balkh Province 42 bandits belonging to the Eslami band, were also captured.

Rebel Leader on Resistance, Soviet 'Invasion'

PA122218 Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 4 May 86 p 3-A

[Text] "The resistance fighting in Afghanistan against the Soviet invaders has control of 80 percent of the country and maintains an independent administration throughout those territories," Abdul Rahim, high political officer of Unity, the Afghan resistance umbrella organization to which the country's seven fronts belong, has said.

Rahim and seven other important Afghan leaders visited the country and met with President Betancur, former President Turbay Ayala, Senate President Alvaro Villegas Moreno, and several leaders of the Conservative and Liberal Parties and the MOIR [Revolutionary Independent Workers Movement].

Abdul Rahim set forth the object of his visit to Colombia, which is part of a tour that includes visits to Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and Argentina: "I came to Latin America to seek recognition for the Afghan resistance and to tell the true story of Soviet brutality in my country."

At the diplomatic level, the main concern of the visiting Afghan envoys is to issue a warning regarding the Soviet intentions at the Geneva talks and the development of the situation of the Afghan conflict at the United Nations.

"Since Gorbachev's assumption of power in Moscow, the Soviets have substantially escalated the war. At the same time, they have shrewdly managed to organize talks between Kabul and Pakistan in Geneva under the sponsorship of the United Nations. These are not really the two parties involved. The conflict is between the resistance and the Soviets. The Geneva affair is part of the Soviet tactic to make it appear that peace is being negotiated, while in effect the war is escalating," Rahim explained.

He indicated that the Afghan resistance has attributed great importance to Latin America's public opinion and support. Regarding the Soviets' intentions, he said: "In Geneva they are attempting to obtain recognition for the puppet in Kabul, while we are taking steps around the world to obtain recognition for the resistance. That way, if an agreement is produced it should acknowledge the resistance as an essential party in the conflict."

Abdul Rahim recalled that last October a delegation of the Afghan resistance went to the United Nations and sat in the place designated for the official Afghan delegation. "On that occasion, 121 countries condemned the invasion and we circulated a formal petition to give the resistance the official representation at the United Nations. Latin America's vote is very important," he said, adding that the resistance currently maintains offices in several countries.

"The whole world knows that the Soviets invaded Afghanistan with 80,000 men in 1979, promising to crush the resistance. However, the resistance has in fact resisted and 6 years later we control 80 percent of the territory," Abdul Rahim said, as he gave an overview of the current situation in his country.

"Seven years later the Soviets have more than 200,000 troops stationed in Afghanistan and maintain there one of the most sophisticated outfits ever used by an invading country. It includes hundreds of the advanced MI-24 helicopters, high performance bombers, modern tanks, all kinds of long-range weapons, and a broad assortment of missiles," he said.

The Aghan leader indicated that in the beginning the Soviets' principal objective was to destroy the bases of the Afghan resistance. However, after they were defeated, they went on to their second objective. "Now their war is against the people. They stage bombings to destroy the agricultural system, but succeed only in destroying many lives. Thousands of people have been killed. Thousands of others have been maimed."

According to Abdul Rahim, the following is the toll of this Soviet war against the people: "In these 6 years, 1 million have died and more than 4 million Afghans are refugees abroad."

However, he stated: "We must nevertheless repeat that the resistance has control of at least 80 percent of the country and that we have seized many weapons. The objective of the resistance now is to occupy the Soviet bases. Large direct confrontations and fierce guerrilla warfare are taking place to seize those positions."

Giving a general outline of the current military situation in Afghanistan, the political official stated: "From the military viewpoint, the infantry aspect, the Soviet are losing in our country. But the greatest problem for us is the air attacks because they have very powerful airplanes and helicopters."

The seven groups which for several years had fought in a separate and uncoordinated manner against the Soviets, united firmly in Unity, the great front of the Afghan resistance led by Professor Rabbani.

The unity of all the fighters in a single organization has brought about the generalization throughout the country of the war of the Afghan rsistance against the Soviets to such a point that, as Abdul Rahim pointed out: "All the Afghan people have taken up weapons."

Nevertheless, there are places in the country where there is more intense fighting. "The Panjsher Valley continues to be the region of the most intense fighting against the invaders. The Soviets have 20 advance posts there, but most of the valley is controlled by the resistance. All our forces inside the valley and nearby are fighting to expel the invaders. It is a key site in the war."

In the same way, Abdul Rahim stressed another combat zone: "Sooner or later, the resistance will end up expelling the Soviets from Afghanistan because this is what we have done with all those who have invaded us in the last 5,000 years of our history. In addition to the Panjsher Valley, we are currently fighting in the city of Qandahar where there is fighting in the streets and its outskirts. Another permanent war zone is the border with Pakistan where many invaders have died. The same thing occurs in the city of Paktia and in northern Afghanistan."

Throughout this already long conflict, the Soviets have used all kinds of weapons, including those prohibited by international agreements. "If something has been shown by the invasion of our country, it is precisely the real character of the Soviets. They have acted like modern day barbarians there and their most aberrant form of behavior is the use of chemical weapons that kill many people by poisoning them. The Soviets have also bombed villages, towns, and cities. They have carried out these bombings not against military targets, but against the population in general, and in this way thousands of people, especially children and old people, have died," he recounted.

Abdul Rahim and the other envoys of the Afghan resistance against the Soviets came to Latin America with this news.

Riyadh: Mujahidin Use Missiles To Attack Jalalabad
GF130606 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] Afghan mujahidin sources reported today that the Mujahidin attacked the city of Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan with missiles the day before yesterday killing six Soviet troops and destroying four helicopters. The mujahidin added that they also destroyed a radar station and three tanks.

Gandhi States U.S. Raid on Libya Unjustified

BK130903 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 13 May 86

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has said that the American action in Libya is totally unjustified. In an interview to the Egyptian paper, *AL-AHRAM*, he said the U.S. action will not stop terrorism but would open up new areas for pressure tactics.

About Indo-U.S. ralations, Mr Gandhi said the two countries have made a lot of headway in their ties. He made it clear that India does not want a collision course with any superpower. About the Nonaligned Movement, Mr Gandhi said that it has grown stronger in the last few years.

External Affairs Spokesman on Terrorism in Nepal

BK121605 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] India has assured Nepal that it will never permit its territory to be used for any undesirable activity aimed against that country. In a statement in New Delhi today, a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry expressed India's concern at reports in the Nepalese press about acts of terrorism in Nepal by some persons who claimed to have entered that country from India. He said the government is cooperating fully with the Nepalese authorities in investigating these reports from the Indian side of the border. Anybody found to be involved in acts of terrorism would be dealt with severely.

The spokesman pointed out that the Indian Government has always been opposed to terrorism in all its forms. This is particularly so when it occurs on the soil of a country with whom India has always enjoyed the closest and most friendly relations.

Continuing Violence in Sri Lanka Condemned

BK130929 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 13 May 86

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr P. Shiv Shankar, has said that the government condemns the continuing violence in Sri Lanka and reiterates its firm view that there can be no military solution to the ethnic dispute in that country.

Mr Shiv Shankar said the continuing violence is vitiating the atmosphere for working toward a peaceful solution. He said the basic and urgent objective which India has in mind, is to find a peaceful and durable political solution to the long pending ethnic problem of Sri Lanka. The minister was making a statement in response to a call-attention motion on the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka and the outcome of the recent visit of the Indian delegation to that country in the Rajya Sabha today. The motion was moved by Mr V. Gopalaswamy, DMK, and 24 others.

Mr Shiv Shankar made it clear that unless the Government of Sri Lanka takes decisive steps to accommodate the Tamil aspirations, the political process, whch has been restarted after a gap of time, may suffer a set back.

Making a mention of the Indian delegation led by Mr P. Chidambaram which visited Colombo recently, Mr Shiv Shanker said that the delegation had come back with some more detailed formulations specifying to what extent the Sri Lanka Government is willing to meet the Tamils' political aspirations. While there has been some progress on issues like the overall structure for devolution of power and land settlement policy, there have been a number of crucial gaps in the formulations on code issues like law and order and the relationship between the present northern and eastern provinces, to which the Tamils attach great importance. The formulations are being evaluated by the government.

The Sri Lanka Government has also been requested to communicate their views on certain alternative formulations. Mr Shiv Shankar said that only a package of proposals, which can be considered fair and reasonable for a negotiated settlement, can be put to the Tamil side. Since the process is continuing, it would be premature to draw any conclusion.

Initiating the discussion, Mr Gopalaswamy said that Sri Lanka Government should be told that diplomatic ties will be cut off if the killings do not stop immediately. He was supported by many opposition members. A suggestion was made for making an attempt for economic sanctions against Sri Lanka. Several members pointed out that the Sri Lanka Government has failed to keep its commitments on many earlier occasions.

A member said that President Jayewardene is trying to internationalize the Sri Lanka problem by inviting Western powers to support him against the Tamils. An opposition member said that India cannot ignore the manner in which human rights are being eroded in Sri Lanka and wanted an all-party delegation to be sent there. Another member suggested that a definite time frame be drawn for solving the issue. Several opposition and ruling party members said the happenings in Sri Lanka disturbed peace in the region. The debate is continuing.

Home Affairs Minister on Governor's Rule in Kashmir

BK121630 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 May 86

[Excerpt] The minister of state for home affairs, Mr Ram Niwas Mirdha, today assured the Rajya Sabha that the Center has no intention to impose its will on the Jammu and Kashmir governor. He said nothing will be done which is against the law of the land. Mr Mirdha was replying to a call attention motion moved by Mr K. Mohanand, CPI-M, and others on the continued suspended animation of the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly. Several opposition members demanded that the assembly be dissolved, fresh elections held, and a democratic government installed in place of governor's rule. Mr Mirdha said the proclamation of governor's rule in the state will cease to operate on the expiry of 6 months from the date of its imposition on 7 March last. He said it is for the governor to take a view on the matter during this period.

Giving details of the efforts being made to restore communal harmony and normalcy in the state, the minister said a high-level board has been set up to oversee the law and order situation.

Police administration has been strengthened by providing paramilitary forces to the state. An effective vigil is being maintained at the borders.

Akali Dal Reaffirms Confidence in Punjab Minister

BK121611 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] The Akali Dal working committee has reaffirmed its full confidence in the leadership of the chief minister, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala, at its emergency meeting held in Chandigarh today. The meeting, which was attended by 22 out of 31 members of the committee, also empowered Mr Barnala to take appropriate action against members indulging in anti-party and anti-Panthic [anti-community] activities.

The meeting expressed satisfaction that Mr Barnala got the Golden Temple complex clear of terrorists and militants as per the direction of Sharbat Khalsa [Sikh highest congregation] convention held at Anandpur Saheb in February. The committee also urged the Center to implement immediately the Punjab accord to restore peace and normalcy in the state. The meeting directed Mr Barnala to launch a popular movement to fulfill the dreams of Sant Longowal promoting unity, peace, and amity.

The executive committee of SGPC [Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee], which also met in Chandigarh this afternoon, referred the question of starting kar seva [voluntary service] at Akal Takht Sahib [highest seat of Sikh religion] till its next meeting.

The Jullundur police in Punjab have arrested a wanted terrorist, Gur Sevak Singh, alias Babla, who had escaped from Jodhpur jail sometime back. He carried an award on his head. He was responsible for the shooting incident in Ludhiana on 28 March last in which 43 people were killed and many others injured.

Meanwhile, one person was killed when three unidentified youths fired at him near village Sekhwan in Gurdaspur District this morning. The victim identified as the sarpanch [village council member] of the village, was going on a scooter when he was attacked by the assailants.

1 Killed in Firing in Darjeeling Strike

BK121617 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] One person was killed in police firing and several others, including police personnel, were injured in a series of incidents on the first day of a 3-day Darjeeling bundh [strike] today.

According to official sources, police opened fire in self-defense when a large group of Gurkha activists, who gave a call for the bandh, stormed the Panihata police outpost under the Natalbari police station injuring policemen stationed there. In other incidents of violence, the supporters of the bundh attacked state transport buses at four places.

Police reinforcements have been deployed at vulnerable points and prohibitary orders under Section 144 Criminal Procedure Code [prohibiting assembly of five or more persons] have been promulgated in the town.

Continuing Reportage on 'Indirect Talks' in Geneva

Talks Resume 12 May

BK121551 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] The seventh round of indirect talks on Afghanistan resumed in Geneva today after the weekend holidays. The special representative of the UN secretary general, Diego Cordovez, met with Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan and other members of his delegation this morning. They held talks on the more important parts of the 9-point draft of the fourth instrument of the proposed comprehensive settlement to the Afghanistan issue. Cordovez was to meet with the Kabul administration's foreign minister, Shah Mohammad Dost, in the afternoon.

According to the ASSOCIATED PRESS of PAKISTAN, Cordovez is expected to urge the Kabul administration's delegation to respond decisively to his proposals about the revised draft of the fourth instrument. Pakistan has already expressed positive and comprehensive reaction on all the clauses of the revised draft, while the reaction of the Soviet-installed Kabul administration is still awaited. A spokesman of the Pakistani delegation told APP that the success of the present round of talks depends on the Kabul administration's reaction and on how far the changes in the fourth instrument of the draft of the proposed comprehensive settlement is mutually accepted. The spokesman said that the present talks at this point can be advanced only after a reply from the foreign minister of the Kabul administration.

DAWN: DRA Leadership Change Based on Tribal Issues

GF121121 Karachi DAWN in English 8 May 86 p 4

[Editorial: "Events in Kabul"]

[Text] How should one read the signals coming from Kabul? Over the past half-decade the optimists gazing in the crystal ball of Afghanistan's internal developments have had a bad time. The reaction, therefore, to Babrak Karmal's resignation as party-boss has been extremely cautious. It all began with reading tea-leaves in the style of old Kremlin-watchers: the leader conspicuously absented himself at the 8th anniversary of the Communist Revolution in Afghanistan; the Soviet party newspaper *PRAVDA* on that occasion criticised his government for having fallen short of important targets of social reform; then came the elevation of Khad [state intelligence service] chief, young Major-General Najibullah, to the post of party Secretary-General. Seen against the background of the Soviet paradigm, a president is a mere figure-head if he is not also the party-boss. Read with this floss, the new scenario represents the downfall of Babrak Karmal and the elevation to supreme power of a young candidate who will follow more closely the Soviet prescription, whatever that may be.

Is there in all this a signal from Moscow that should uplift the doves? A significant development at the 7th proximity talks at Geneva is that the Kabul delegation is no longer insisting on direct dialogue, a condition of foreclosure applied by Babrak Karmal who wished to be recognised before the discussion of the fourth instrument on Soviet withdrawal. But no one is falling for such overtures any longer, especially as the present Geneva round is expected to throw up a more or less final picture of positions.

Yet, what has happened in Kabul denotes change and one must study that even if it means nothing in the context of resolution of the international crisis. When Taraki was killed by Hafizullah Amin, it was a hardline communist Pashtun replacing a moderate communist Pashtun. The facile interpretation that was immediately applied to that change in leadership was that a Khalq ideologue closer to Moscow had now assumed control. But it turned out to be otherwise. The Soviets not only did not like Amin, they intervened to prevent an alleged betrayal of the revolution. The Khalq was replaced by Parcham at the apex of power and the infighting Pashtuns were replaced by a moderate upper-class Tajik, Babrak Karmal.

Now the replacement of Karmal may mean a number of things: It could be an inability on the part of the leader to adjust to the Gorbachev team at the Kremlin, recalling the disorder in Eastern Europe after Khruschev changed the Stalinist style of ruling the satellites; it could even be the Kremlin adjustment to realities in Afghanistan. Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan and take reluctantly to someone else ruling them despite their own 'tarboor-wali' [in the literal sense, bitter feuds between cousins] custom of internecine warfare.

Moreover, the war in Afghanistan is predominantly a war against the Pashtuns, and Najibullah a Pashtun, has appeared to observers to be handling them better than Babrak Karmal. The change in Kabul is no doubt a readjustment to remedy the complications of governance and control.

NEPAL

Reportage on Elections for National Parliament

Polling 'Held Peacefully'

BK121437 Katmandu External Service in English 1415 GMT 12 May 86

[Excerpts] General elections for 108 out of 112 seats to the Rashtriya Panchayat [national parliament] were held peacefully in 73 districts of the Kingdom today. Voters throughout the Kingdom exercised their franchise from 0800 to 1700 today. Eleven thousand six hundred and ninety-four polling centers and subcenters were set up for the elections. Nine thousand four hundred and twenty-five candidates are contesting the elections.

About 100,000 personnel were engaged to help conduct elections peacefully and to maintain law and order throughout the Kingdom. Arrangements have been made for the ballot boxes to be brought safely to the returning offices at the 73 district headquarters and as soon as all the boxes arrive counting will start. Once the counting is complete the results will be announced, according to law.

According to the Election Commission, repolling will take in 15 polling centers and subcenters.

Meanwhile, RSS [RASHTRIYA SAMACHAR SAMITY -- national news agency] says that seven people were injured in clashes in (Bakhira) and [name indistinct] centers. They are reported to be undergoing treatment in the hospital.

Voting Resumes 13 May

BK130759 Hong Kong AFP in English 0749 GMT 13 May 86

[By Kedar Man Singh]

[Text] Katmandu, May 13 (AFP) — Voting in Nepal's general election resumed Tuesday at seven of the 26 polling centers where it was halted Monday night following minor clashes between rival supporters, an election official said. The remaining 19 centers were to reopen Wednesday to complete the polling which began Monday morning in 73 of the country's 75 districts, the official said.

A total of nine people were reported injured in the violence, including two who sustained bullet wounds when police opened fire to break up a clash at Katkataiya in the Mahotari District.

Other districts in which voting was interrupted are Parbat, Sunsari, Sirha, Saptari, Bhaktapur, Sindhupalchowk, Kabhre, Nuwakot, Dhanukha and Makwanpur, according to an official statement issued Monday night.

Meanwhile, several candidates, including Padma Thakurathi in southwestern Kanchanpur District and former prime minister Surya Bahadur Thapa, accused district officials of interfering in Monday's polling. They charged that the officials had tampered with ballot boxes while they were being transported to administrative centers, saying that polling agents were not allowed to accompany the boxes.

A senior government spokesman denied the charges, saying that district administrations had been strictly ordered to play an impartial role during and after the election. "Out of the 11,694 polling booths in the 73 districts, the disturbances at some places because of personal rivalries between the candidates are but natural," he added.

Vote counting had already begun Tuesday at several major district headquarters, including Katmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur, and officials were due to begin announcing results later in the day, an official source said.

Turnout at the polls Monday was estimated by officials at more than 65 per cent of the 8.7 million people eligible to vote in the 73 districts. Voting in the remaining two districts was postponed until later this month because two candidates died during the election campaign. One was killed in a road accident and the other died of cancer.

Monday's election was seen as a crucial test of the country's 25-year-old partyless Panchayat system as the government has maintained that it has popular support while the opposition says people want the freedom to choose a party-based system.

Political observers here predicted that new faces would constitute more than 55 per cent of the 112 members elected to the national Panchayat (parliament). Most voters went to the polls with a hope that new members with anti-Panchayat leanings would help bring about changes in the Nepalese socio-economic and political situation, the observers said.

Some districts return two candidates and, in addition to the 112 elected Panchayat members, King Birendra appoints 28.

SRI LANKA

India's Dixit, President Discuss Tamil Issue

BK130358 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 13 May 86

[Excerpts] A Sri Lankan customs official is reported to have confessed for having planted the bomb that exploded aboard an Air Lanka's jetliner in Colombo last month.

Meanwhile, India has called upon Sri Lanka to lend momentum to the discussions on the ethnic issue to arrive at an early settlement. This was conveyed to the Sri Lankan president by the Indian high commissioner in Sri Lanka, Mr J.N. Dixit, when he called on Mr Jayewardene in Colombo yesterday.

He conveyed India's concern at the sufferings inflicted on civilians in the continuing violence in the island.

Our Colombo correspondent, Plabon Majumder, reports that Mr Dixit is likely to have further discussions on the details of the Sri Lankan proposals with the concerned ministers.

Security Minister Denies Visiting Israel

BK121145 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali denied Indian press reports that he had been to Israel last week. Mr Athulathmudali said that he had been to Britain and was away for 3 nights.

THE HINDU newspaper had said that the minister was reported to have gone to Israel on a secret mission to get more support for an all out military offensive against Tamil militants in the Jaffna peninsula. On 10 May, another journalist wrote in the same newspaper that the minister was on a secret trip to Israel on an undisclosed mission.

Meanwhile, Lands and Mahaweli Minister Gamini Dissanayake is paying an official visit to Cuba.

Athulathmudali Terms Manuevers 'Normal' Rotation

BK130529 Hong Kong AFP in English 0509 GMT 13 May 86

[Text] Colombo, May 13 (AFP — The Sri Lankan Government denied Tuesday that troops headed north were intended for a major offensive against militant Tamil separatists there. National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE that current troop movements were the normal turn-around of soldiers and had nothing to do with any planned offensive.

He discounted travellers' reports that an "unusual" member of armoured vehicles had moved up north in the last few days. "If we were planning an offensive we would have moved the troops and vehicles by other means and not so openly," Mr Athulathmudali said.

Residents in Jaffna and travellers to the north had reported that troops and armour were sighted heading for the Jaffna peninsula and inferred that the forces were preparing for a major offensive against militant separatists campaigning for an independent state.

Lieutenant-General Cyril Ranatunge, chief of the Joint Operations Command, the main anti-guerrilla headquarters, said that some troops had been in the north for 14 months and others were being replaced in what he said was a routine rotation.

He admitted troops were being strengthened with new equipment but described this as a natural development.

Tamil Refugees Return from Indian Camps

BK121143 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] More refugees are continuing to return to Sri Lanka from the Indian refugee camps. Security sources told LANKA PUWATH that 25 Tamil refugees returned to Mannar, northwest of Sri Lanka, by boat on Saturday morning. The 25 comprised 7 men, 7 women and 11 children.

Majlis Deputies Denounce Economic Summit in Tokyo

GF130920 [Editorial Report] Tehran Domestic Service in Persian begins live coverage of Majlis proceedings at 0435 GMT on 13 May. Reception is good to fair. The session begins with a recitation from the Koran and the announcement of the day's agenda by Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani; the agenda includes the election of candidates to rural Islamic councils.

The first pre-agenda speaker at 0456 GMT is Arbabi, the Chah Bahar deputy. He denounces the summit of seven industrialized nations in Tokyo, the bombing of residential areas in Tripoli and Banghazi, and the reduction of oil prices, which are "an indication of the fact that world oppression wishes to continue its plunder of the Third World. Unfortunately, the Arab world seems to be treading the same path alongside the world oppressors in the guzzling of resources endowed on Muslims and the oppressed countries. The Tokyo summit was convened for a unanimous reduction of oil prices in an attempt to strike against the interests of the Islamic revolution of Iran. This reduction was tailored to benefit only the Western bloc countries. No profits accrue to Third World countries, and in fact world exploitation presented a bright outlook to the developed industrial nations regarding future political and economic developments." He adds the "United States and Great Britain are using this income for attacks on Muslim cities with modern armaments and are brutally taking innocent lives on flimsy and imaginary pretexts. Are not the hands of reactionary Arabs stained with the callous murder of the people of Libya and Palestine?" He says that "just as the Islamic revolution of Iran shattered the balance of power in the area and neutralized scores of plots, it can also foil the consecutive nefarious designs of world oppression by victory over the tottering enemy." He then reports on problems of his constituency.

The second pre-agenda speaker, Savehi from Kerman, comes to the podium at 0505 GMT. He also criticizes the participants of the conference of seven industrialized nations, their plots for an economic embargo, their imposition of a war on the Muslim Iranian nation, and "today's plot or scenario which cannot have any effect on the Muslim and revolutionary people of fraternal Libya." Addressing the United States, he continues, "you could not even enlist the support of your own allies for committing aggression against Libya. What hopes do you have that permit you to issue resolutions? These plots no longer have any effect on the Muslims of the world. Regarding the oil plot, I should say that our country is a fasting nation." He then speaks about Ramadan. "The time is near when mercenaries and the sold-out elements of oppression in the area will have their faces blackened and will reach their nemesis at the hands of the Muslim people of the region." He then reports on domestic issues.

The entire session revolves around the elections to rural Islamic councils, problems of provincial districts, and voting for or against the motions proposed.

The session then adjourns at 0805 GMT when Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani announces that the next session will be held on Thursday 15 May at 0430 GMT.

Gulf Countries Should Reconsider Ties With U.S.

GF130748 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 13 May 86

[Commentary by the Central News Unit Research Group: "U.S. Congress Opposition to the Sale of Arms to the Saudi Regime"]

[Text] No new development has emerged since the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate rejected Reagan's proposal last week for the sale of $354 million in armaments to Saudi Arabia, even though U.S. officials earlier expressed optimism on the dispatch of equipment to Saudi Arabia and had endorsed Reagan's insistence on this issue.

It all began in the first week of April, when Reagan informed the U.S. Congress of his intention to formulate a military accord with Saudi Arabia amounting to $354 million. This included the provision of 1,000 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, 800 surface-to-air Stinger missiles, and 100 Harpoon missiles.

According to U.S. regulations, Congress had 30 days to make a decision on accepting or rejecting this plan. While this was being debated in the U.S. Congress, Richard Murphy endeavored to enlist the support of [House] representatives by stating that the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia was not connected to the Arab-Israeli issue, but was in fact for the protection of U.S. military and economic interests in the Persian Gulf. In a letter aimed at convincing the Congress to support this plan, Shultz called this a move for halting the escalation of the Iran-Iraq war into Saudi Arabia and to lend credence to U.S. support of its allies. Despite the insistence and persuasion of the Reagan administration, the House of Representatives and the Senate announced their opposition to Reagan's scheme, with 356 votes against the 62 votes in favor, and 73 votes against the 22 votes in favor, respectively.

According to U.S. law, Reagan can veto the Senate's rejection. But in the face of opposition from two-thirds of the representatives, the president will have no other option than to accept the congressional decision. In view of the dissenting votes, there is little chance that Reagan will succeed in implementing his proposal, unless positive results are obtained by alternate means, such as efforts to negotiate with the representatives, or if certain changes are made in the details, terms and conditions of the armaments, or in the conditions prevailing in the region.

In any case, apart from the above factors, the views of the opponents indicate that there is considerable apprehension concerning the access of Muslim nations to such armaments, especially to surface-to-air Stinger missiles which can be transported by one person and can down aircraft at an altitude of 5 miles.

Some observers believe that if Reagan is unable to forge such a pact with the Saudi regime — who Washington circles have repeatedly considered a loyal friend and supporter of the United States — such a failure will be tantamount to a failure of Reagan's policy in the region. Rejection of the proposal to provide such weaponry to a regime which has in practice affirmed its loyalty to U.S. interests indicates, in other words, the diffidence in the future stability of this regime, of regimes which have mobilized all their efforts for the protection of U.S. interests, and the safeguarding of the existence of the Zionist regime.

What is interesting is that the growth of Islamic resurgence in the area, the awakening of nations for the retrieval of their long-lost rights, and the emergence of the power and force of Islamic movements which have belied the prevalent assumptions and calculations of the imperialists have made them apprehensive on all fronts. Because Washington had provided sophisticated arms to its allies and loyal supporters with immense generosity and without any qualms or doubts, much of its present anxiety and dread regarding the future outlook is due to the victory of the Islamic revolution and the sagas of heroism and resistance of the Muslim Iranian nation. The Zionists in the U.S. Administration have constantly tried to alleviate this anxiety by playing up the opposition to the Zionist regime of the regimes that are allies of Washington and the need for Israeli military preponderance vis-a-vis neighboring countries.

However, as the Western authorities have stated, the trend of developments in the past decade has proved that such arms have never been used by these regimes against the Zionist regime or against U.S. interests. Even at a time when Israel had exacerbated the anti-Zionist feeling in the Muslim nations of the region by its aggression and atrocities, these regimes had refrained from taking any steps in this regard, and had by their inertia and silence added fuel to fire. Hence it is too farfetched to even imagine the possibility of using these sophisticated arms against Israel or the United States.

In any case, it is appropriate to mention that governments which have during their tenure of office endeavored to consign the potential and resources of the oppressed Muslim nations of the region to lavish pillage and plunder on the pretext of safeguarding the interests of world oppression, should realistically look at the situation concerning the new developments in the region and should not link their future with brutal Western interests.

Further Reportage on Visit of Syria's Al-Shar'

Meets With Khamene'i

LD121735 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', who is visiting Tehran at the head of a delegation, met with President Khamene'i this afternoon. During the meeting, the Syrian foreign minister conveyed a kind message from President al-Asad and his congratulations on the coming of Ramadan. He stressed the importance of further unity between Iran and Syria. The foreign minister added: Syria has always been, and will be, a defender and supporter of Iran in all international circles.

He stressed: Today, the Iraqi people realize that progressive Arab countries do not endorse Saddam's regime. This is good proof of the justification of Iran's struggle against a regime that started the war and which has been hostile and belligerent toward the Islamic revolution from the start.

Thanking him for President al-Asad's warm and kind message and the friendly stance of the Syrian revolutionary government and nation, and expressing congratulations for the coming of Ramadan, President Khamene'i stressed the importance of further unity between the two countries.

Meets With Musavi, Velayati

LD121742 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' met with Prime Minister Musavi this afternoon. During the meeting, which was also attended by the foreign minister and the prime minister's political deputy, the two countries' policies regarding the region were discussed.

Stressing his country's willingness to hold more talks on developments in the Middle East, the Syrian foreign minister emphasized Iran's righteous role in the imposed war. Thanking him for the Syrian Government's stand, Musavi called such talks beneficial. He stressed the importance of coordination between the two governments regarding mutual policies toward enemies.

During a meeting with Foreign Minister Velayati, the Syrian guest stressed the sincere and brotherly relations between the two countries. He described the good relations as grounds for cooperation and coordination between the two countries on the international scene. While submitting a report on the situation in the region, he referred to the United States' threats against Iran, Syria, and Libya and the threats made by the Zionist regime against Syria. He stressed the importance of further unity among the three countries in view of these threats.

Reporting on his trip to Libya, Velayati stressed the good relations between the two countries and the need for further cooperation in the struggle against common enemies. According to our correspondent's report, after meeting our country's high-ranking officials the Syrian foreign minister left Tehran this afternoon.

Envoy to Syria Confers With Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD120606 Tehran IRNA in English 0600 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] May 12, IRNA — The new Iranian ambassador to Damascus, Syria, Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Hasan Akhtari, met and talked with Majlis speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Sunday.

During the meeting the Majlis speaker called for expansion of economic and diplomatic relations between Iran and Syria and strengthening of bilateral cooperation.

President Lauds Army's Achievements

LD121051 Tehran IRNA in English 1035 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 12, IRNA — President and head of the Supreme Defence Council 'Ali Khamene'i speaking to the personnel of the Joint Staff at morning ceremony here Monday said that in post revolutionary period the Iranian Army has made great achievements. The ceremony was attended by the head of the Joint Staff Colonel Esma'il Sohrabi.

Further in his speech he said that one of the most outstanding characteristics of the post-revolutionary army is its strong faith in God and its revolutionary attitude.

The president described the changes in the Armed Forces as astonishing and highly significant and added that there was still a long way to go. He further praised the bravery of the Armed Forces personnel in combating the enemy.

Musavi on Efforts To Contact Nationals Abroad

LD130934 Tehran IRNA in English 0918 GMT 13 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 13, IRNA — All those Iranians abroad with no criminal records who accept and respect the Islamic Republic system and goals of the Iranian nation, can return to the country, said Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi here Tuesday.

Prime Minister Musavi, speaking in a press conference, added that efforts have been made to establish contacts with the Iranians abroad. He said the number of Iranians abroad is estimated to be between one to two millions. Since after the revolution a number of these people have fled the country illegaly, an exact figure is not available, he added.

At present the Ministries of Ershad-e Islami, Information and Foreign Affairs are drawing up a comprehensive plan to attract these people, the premier added. As a measure in this respect, the Iranian Embassies abroad have been instructed to be responsive to these people and help them to free themselves from the humiliation in Western countries.

More on the status of certain Iranians abroad, the prime minister said some of them have been living in undesirable conditions and even a number of them, highly specialized Iranians, are living in bad conditions and doing blue collar works.

He added that it is important to offset the poisonous propaganda of the counterrevolutionaries abroad who have created the impression that Iranians abroad could not return to Iran. The objective of the government, he stressed, is to annul such propaganda.

The Ministry of Ershad-e Islami is preparing tours for the Iranians abroad to visit Iran on their own expense and visit their families and find for themselves the falsity of anti-Islamic revolution propaganda, Prime Minister Musavi added.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Addresses IRGC Naval Units

GF121456 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 1 May 86 p 19

[Text] We should not think that just because we possess a stronger Navy than others in the Persian Gulf that we do not need a people's popular movement at sea. In view of the importance the sea holds for our future, we cannot neglect it. Therefore, the maritime industry of the Guards Corps should be strengthened and researchers should involve themselves in this work.

These remarks were made yesterday by Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Majlis, while addressing naval and amphibious units of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC]. He advised them to sincerely cooperate with the naval forces, adding that the presence of these two forces will further raise our naval strength.

The representative of the imam in the Supreme Defense Council, while referring to the fact that a naval force in the Persian Gulf is of great importance, said: If we have a strong naval force in the Persian Gulf we can safeguard the region and neutralize the plots which are being hatched in the region.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed his pleasure at the formation of the IRGC naval units. He said: The job of setting up an IRGC naval unit started from scratch and this method of working ensures independence. This is very important.

The speaker of the Majlis added: It is possible that the superpowers could easily defend themselves against the conventional capabilities that they themselves have placed in our hands, but they are impotent when confronted with the Hezbollahi forces and other potentials which are out of their reach.

He added: You may, with your initiatives, gradually conquer the broad seas and they will remain impotent against you, as has happened in the land war. No one can tell us that we should go to war or should accept peace; that we should accept these terms or not accept those terms. All this is due to the self-sufficiency which we have achieved in manpower and other potentialities. He stressed the fact that we should create the same situation at sea. We should not think that just because we have a stronger Navy than others in the Persian Gulf that we do not need a popular people's movement at sea. Of course, we have a very powerful Navy which has served us well in the past and has kept up its standards throughout the war. But that is a traditional force and there is a problem of dependence on it. As long as we do not compromise our principles, we must keep our Navy up to those standards which we have kept so far. However, the sea holds much more importance for us and we must increase our sea power even though we are now the strongest naval power in the region. He said that some of our warriors are not satisfied with their activities which are limited to the sea and want to go to the fronts which are hotter than the sea fronts. This is wrong. The sea is a most sensitive front and has more importance.

The Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, our southern shores, and to some extent our northern shores are very important areas. The Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf are not important only for us. They are important for the whole world. A major part of the world's riches can be found here. The reactionaries of the region are an institution for hatching plots at a time when a major part of the world's economy is provided by this region.

The speaker of the Majlis, while referring to the economic resources in this region, said that these are very important. Our ports are vital to our country and should be safeguarded. It goes without saying that the areas of your operations are very important and your presence will complement the naval forces.

The imam's representative in the Supreme Defense Council referred to the long services rendered by the Navy and said that it has gained much experience and knowledge in maritime

affairs. He advised the commander of the IRGC naval units to cooperate sincerely with the Navy of the Islamic Republic. He praised the services rendered by the IRGC naval and amphibious units in the Badr, Khaybar, and especially the "Val-Fajr-8" operations.

An account of the activities of the IRGC naval and amphibious units was given to Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani during this meeting.

Sheykh ol-Eslam: Ties With Sweden, Hungary 'Good'

LD111658 Tehran IRNA in English 1425 GMT 11 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA — Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam said here Sunday that Sweden and Hungary have rather good positions vis-a-vis Iran. The deputy minister who returned Saturday from a six-day tour to Sweden and Hungary said he had discussed international conventions governing war with the Swedish officials.

Speaking to a press conference, Sheykh ol-Eslam said he had also met officials from 'Sipiri' organization which is responsible for defending the internationally-accepted conventions. The Sipiri officials had wanted to investigate Iraqi violation of international laws, he added.

Sheykh ol-Eslam's talks in Hungary had covered bilateral relations, international peace, disarmament as well as the recent U.S. attack on Libya, he said.

Price Freeze Decreed on Manufactured Goods Contracts

LD131301 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 13 May 86

[Text] According to decisions taken during today's session of the Economic Mobilization Headquarters, on the basis of the organization's legal standards for the protection of consumers and producers and in order to prevent irrational price rises, all manufacturing units must observe the prices set by that organization. The signing of any form of contract for the sale of goods by manufacturing units, which might in any way lead to price fixing, is declared illegal, null and void.

The instructions issued by the Commerce Ministry regarding the regulations covering the distribution of domestic products are still in force.

The publication of this announcement in the media is considered as an official decree. Those not observing pricing and distribution regulations will be prosecuted.

Trade Figures For Past Year Released

LD111007 Tehran IRNA in English 0930 GMT 11 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA — A report on foreign trade of the country, during the past Iranian year (ended March) released here Sunday, said that a total of 17.37 million tons of goods worth 1,089 billion rials (U.S. dlrs. 13.5 billion) arrived in the country. The goods imported registered a 13 percent decline in terms of the value when compared to the goods imported during the preceding year.

Meanwhile during the year a total of 526,000 tons of non-oil goods worth 41 billion rials (U.S. dlrs. 500 million) were exported, up by 98 percent in terms of weight and 25 percent in terms of value in comparison to the preceding year.

There was an increase of 37 percent in value of exported hand-woven carpets compared to the previous year and it made up for 24 percent of the total volume of non-oil exports, about 11 billion rials (U.S. dlrs. 120 million), the highest figure in the exports items. Pistachio, hide and cotton were next major items in the list.

As for the passengers, a total of 1,192,448 passengers arrived in the country out of which 369,692 were foreigners. Meanwhile, some 1,237,954 passengers, 877,076 of whom were Iranians, left the country.

The number of trucks bringing goods into the country were reported to be 235,045 which imported 3,460,000 tons of goods. At the same time 2,688 trucks exported total 41,659 tons of goods.

50 Million Rials Allocated for Flood Relief

LD071030 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 7 May 86

[Excerpt] According to the Khorramabad Central News Unit, following the floods in Lorestan Province, which destroyed some farms and livestock in the area, Prime Minister Musavi allocated 50 million rials for preliminary relief work for the victims.

According to this report, all the villages in Lorestan that had been surrounded by flood water are clear now. Relief operations and transport of food to the victims continue.

Economists Advocate Expansion of Non-Oil Exports

GF080640 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 8 May 86

[Text] According to our correspondent, our country's economic experts — in their analysis of the effects and repercussions of the reduction of oil prices on the country's economy — have proposed that all the resources of the country in the fields of agriculture, mines, and industry should be mustered and mobilized for an expansion of non-oil commodities.

In a report entitled, "An Assessment of the Practical Expansion of Our Country's Industrial and Traditional Exports," presented to the 14th session of the National Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Mines regarding the survey of untapped potential in the fields of agriculture, mines, and industry, the proper development and utilization of these resources was advocated. According to this report, only 32 percent of arable land and 21 percent of the usable water resources are being utilized in the field of agriculture. This should be increased and expanded.

In the field of metallic and non-metallic minerals, Iran is the fifth richest country in the field of minerals and proper facilities for the extraction of the minerals should be provided.

In industry, only 51 percent of the country's larger factories were operational suring the past year and optimun use is not being made of the country's technical know-how and expertise. Possible sources of the country's entrepreneurial potential have remained untapped.

The report adds: The per capita income in industry is one-fifth of the per capita income in the services department, and the growth of investment in the industrial sector amounts to only one-third of the investment in the services department. It is essential that compensatory measures be implemented in order to eliminate (?bottlenecks) in this department.

The report states that non-oil exports increased by 25 percent in the past year as compared to those in 1984, and it is predicted that they will rise by 20 to 50 percent in the current year and will reach $600 million.

Reportage on Combat Operations in War With Iraq

Communique No 2,468

LD121729 Tehran IRNA in English 1710 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 12, IRNA — The Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces reported here Monday that exchange of artillery fire continued in the northwestern fronts Sunday as a result of which Iraqi mortar and artillery fire was silenced and several enemy bunkers demolished. A number of Iraqi soldiers were also killed or wounded.

The Joint Staff Communique Number 2468 says that Iraqi forces supported by helicopter gunships and artillery fire launched an offensive against Iranian positions in (Lolan) at 03:30 hours GMT Sunday but confronted firm resistance of Iranian Muslim combatants. Battle still continues in the area.

Artillery fire of Iranian Muslim forces on Iraqi positions in the western fronts destroyed five bunkers and observation posts and killed or wounded a number of their soldiers, says the communique.

Iraqi tanks in Kani-Sheykh and Halaleh were shelled and sustained casualties and damage by Iranian artillery fire. In Zobeydah and Abadan, artillery fire of Iranian gendarmerie forces inflicted casualties and damage on Iraqi troops, according to the communique.

Iraqi Port Hit

LD121923 Tehran IRNA in English 1842 GMT 12 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 12, IRNA — Long range artillery fire of Muslim forces of Iran hit Iraq's Umm Qasr port installations at 10:30 hour (07:00 hours GMT) Monday in retaliation for the recent Iraqi aggressions.

Meanwhile, Khatam ol-Anbiya' joint headquarters of the Army and the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps said that Iranian Muslim combatants repulsed two Iraqi counter-attacks in Bejliyeh and Sharhani Monday, killing or wounding hundreds of Iraqi soldiers and capturing a number of others. One combat and two infantry battalions of Iraqi forces were smashed and over 12 tanks together with scores of personnel carriers of theirs demolished during the counter-offensives, the headquarters said.

Khatam ol-Anbiya' Hq. said Iranian jet fighters bombed concentration center of Iraqi armoured units and enemy command headquarters north of Faqqeh Sunday and Monday inflicting substantial casualties and losses on them. The Iranian planes which made the raids at 14:00 GMT Sunday and 14:30 GMT Monday all returned to their bases safely, according to the headquarters. Iranian Muslim combatants are now purging the region from the rest of defeated Iraqi troops, the headquarters concluded.

Faqqeh Sector Bombed 13 May

GF130443 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 13 May 86

[Text] The Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced that at 0525 [0155 GMT] this morning the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force jetfighters intensively bombed the enemy's armored divisions in the Faqqeh operational sector. According to this report, heavy casualties were inflicted on the Zionist enemy. This report states that the Iranian jetfighters returned safely to their bases after these operations.

Further Details Faqqeh Operation

LD131155 Tehran IRNA in English 1135 GMT 13 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 13, IRNA — Iranian jet fighters in a series of successful operations bombarded concentration centers of Iraqi armored hardware and equipment in Faqqeh operational region three times Tuesday, according to Khatam ol-Anbiya' Headquarters Tuesday. The headquarters said the Iranian planes all returned to their bases safely after successfully making the raids at 05:25, 08:25 and 09:35 (01:55, 04:55 and 06:05 GMT).

The raids follow victories of Iranian Muslim combatants over Iraqi troops in Faqqeh. Heavy fighting has been reported in the area since early May. Faqqeh is about 125 km northwest of provincial capital city of Ahvaz in Iran's southern front. Iraq's Fourth Corp faces Muslim combatants in the area.

Khatam ol-Anbiya' is the joint operational headquarters of the army and the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps.